

**ABSTRACT**

A method and system automatically activates a mobile station in a wireless communications network. The system includes an over the air activation function (OTAF) processor in the network that initiates an activation process in response to receiving a registration message from a mobile switching center serving the mobile station requesting the activation. Each mobile station has a unit of information stored into it at the time of its manufacture to enable it to request over the air activation. That unit of information is either the network routing address of the OTAF processor, or alternately, it is a value that is translatable into that address, either an OTAF ID number that is the same value for every mobile station or it is a sequentially serialized dummy value for the mobile identification number (a dummy MIN). When the mobile station is turned on for the first time in the network, it requests activation over the air by transmitting to the local mobile switching center a registration order. The registration order will include one of the three alternative forms of the information unit described above, either the routing address of the OTAF processor, or the OTAF ID number, or a dummy MIN.